

My comments are regarding the regulation of VRS services and the abuse or harassment from either caller towards the interpreter and the ten minute rule that states an interpreter must stay with a call for ten minutes before being replaced.

I am a nationally certified (RID CI/CT) interpreter and have been interpreting for over 14 years. I have been involved as a VRS interpreter for over 4 months now and can think of many situations that would or could arise where I would need to be replaced before 10 minutes were up. I have experienced a call where I asked for clarification on a name/number within the first several seconds on a call and the Deaf caller responded by accusing me of not understanding his signs and not paying attention when he originally gave them. Even after explaining that I was trying to make sure all the information was correct to ensure good service, he continued to accuse me of being a lousy interpreter, etc. I called for another interpreter to take over because I knew that to continue the call would not be in either parties' best interest. I could not provide a quality service knowing that the client did not feel I was competent - plus I had been personally insulted and, like it or not, it's hard to continue a call under those conditions. I think there are many situations involving language, personalities, proficiency and conflict differences that can be assessed within a few minutes by a qualified/certified interpreter. The RID code of ethics provides us guidelines on what types of interpreting assignments we should/should not accept - our ability to know our own limits and boundaries ensures quality interpreting for the Deaf and hard of hearing community. I don't feel the 10-minute rule will enhance this practice but will eventually work to the detriment of all involved. Thank you.